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SUBJECT: UN REVIEW OF IRAQ SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OFF TO A
SLOW START

REF: 08 BAGHDAD 2769

¶1. (SBU) Minister of Science and Technology (MoST) Ra'id Fahmi Jahid told a visiting group of Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF) representatives on February 11 that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) science, technology, and innovation policies (STIP) review of Iraq is "experiencing some delays." MoST signed a memorandum of understanding with UNCTAD over 5 months ago to undertake the STIP review (reftel). Deputy Minister Samir Attar, MoST's lead official for the STIP review, said they expect an official start "perhaps within a couple months," and expects UNCTAD to take 12-18 months after the start of the review before issuing their final STIP report. (Comment: Embassy will continue to encourage the GOI to complete the STIP review, but given the likelihood of results not being released for almost two years, we will not delay cooperative programs in science and technology in anticipation of the review's recommendations. End comment.)

¶2. (SBU) When asked, Minister Fahmi immediately offered that he did not have any preconceived notions about what MoST or the GOI would do in response to the report. "The most important result of this process will be the collective understanding we gain from working with the other ministries as we assess our resources, needs, and national goals." The GOI is preparing for the STIP review, he said, by studying STIP reviews of other countries completed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, UNCTAD, the World Bank, and the UN Education, Science, and Culture Organization (UNESCO). The GOI Council of Ministers established a National STIP Review Committee in September, 2008, headed by MoST and including representatives of 16 GOI entities, including 12 ministries (Science and Technology, Water Resources, Industry, Higher Education, Oil, Agriculture, Communications, Environment, Planning, Trade, Transportation, and Foreign Affairs), the KRG, and the Prime Minister's Office.

¶3. (U) Participant list:

Iraq:

- Ra'id Fahmi Jahid -- Minister of Science and Technology
- Dr. Samir Raouf -- Senior Deputy Minister
- Dr. Faoud Shati -- Deputy Minister
- Dr. Diyaa Al-Mawlawi -- MoST Advisor
- Dr. Adil Matoob -- MoST Advisor
- Mrs. Sundus Mousa -- Minister's Executive Assistant

United States:

- AMB (Ret.) Joseph DeThomas -- CRDF Director for Nonproliferation Programs
- Roy Therrien -- Embassy Baghdad ESTH Officer
- Dean Sinclair -- Iraq Scientist Engagement Program Field Office Executive Director
- Dr. Carlton Phillips -- Texas Technical University Professor of Biological Sciences

- Cindi Warren Mentz -- CRDF Middle East Program Director
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